

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY RIYADH
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 1659

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT OMISSIONS AND PARA NBR)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, XF, PLO
SUBJ: PALESTINIANS AND THE PEACE PROCESS

REF: CAIRO 14966 (NOTAL)

1. WE ENDORSE CAIRO'S RECOMMENDATION WE DO WHAT WE CAN TO
DEMONSTRATE WE ARE NOT ABANDONING THE PALESTINIANS AND IN SO
DOING TRY TO STRENGTHEN THE BELEAGUERED PALESTINIAN MODERATES.
THIS IS ADMITTEDLY A TRICKY THING AT A TIME WHEN WE ARE TRYING
TO INDUCE ISRAEL TO COME TO GRIPS WITH PALESTINIAN PROBLEM.
SOME THINGS ARE ALREADY BEING DONE AND PERHAPS THERE ARE ADDITIONAL
WAYS IN WHICH WE CAN DEMONSTRATE OUR RECOGNITION THAT PALESTINIAN
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RIGHTS ARE AT THE HEART OF THE ME PROBLEM EVEN THOUGH THE
PALESTINIANS THEMSELVES ARE NOT IN A POSITION TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE DIPLOMATIC PROCESS AT PRESENT.

2. CAIRO'S SUGGESTION (REFTEL) THAT SELECTED WEST BANK MAYORS
BE INVITED TO THE US HAS BEEN ANTICIPATED BY CONGEN: HALHUL'S
MULHIM WENT IN MAY 1977, BETHLEHEM'S FREIJ IS DUE IN JULY

1978 AND HEBRON'S QAWASIMA IN SEPTEMBER 1978. OTHER GRANTEES HAVE BEEN DEANS OF BOTH BETHLEHEM AND BIR ZEIT UNIVERSITIES, DEVELOPMENT SPECIALISTS, WELL-KNOWN POET ABDEL LATIF AQEL AND IN FALL 1978, NOVELIST SAHHAR KHALIFAH.

3. AS ADDRESSEES MAY BE AWARE, THERE IS ALSO A MODEST AID PROGRAM FOR THE WEST BANK AND GAZA. SINCE FY 1975, UNDER THE MIDDLE EAST SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FUND, THE US HAS SPONSORED AN AID PROGRAM CHanneled THROUGH VOLUNTARY AGENCIES SUCH AS AMERICAN NEAR EAST REFUGEE AID, (ANERA) CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES, AND MOST RECENTLY, AMIDEAST. THE LEGISLATIVE INTENT OF THIS PROGRAM IS TO REFLECT US CONCERN FOR THE WELFARE OF WEST BANK AND GAZA RESIDENTS AND THAT THE "AMERICAN-ARAB CHARACTER" OF THE PROGRAM BE MAINTAINED. AMOUNTS HAVE BEEN MODEST: FY 1975 - \$1 MILLION; FY 1976 - \$1.6 MILLION; FY 1977 - \$3.5 MILLION; AND FY 1978 - \$2.4 MILLION (CURRENTLY PROPOSED) AND THE PROGRAM HAS BEEN SELECTIVE. NEVERTHELESS, WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THIS SYMBOLIC ASSISTANCE IS RECOGNIZED AND APPRECIATED BY LOCAL LEADERS AND ENCOURAGED THEM TO BELIEVE THAT THE US HAS AN INTEREST IN MAINTAINING AND DEVELOPING ITS RELATIONS WITH MODERATE PALESTINIANS. ONE SPECIFIC EXAMPLE OF THE SUCCESS OF THIS LOW-KEY PROGRAM HAS OCCURRED AT BIR ZEIT UNIVERSITY WHICH SEVERAL YEARS AGO WOULD BARELY ASSOCIATE WITH US GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. IT HAS ACCEPTED FACULTY ASSISTANCE AND GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS, AND RECENTLY IT HAS SOUNDED OUT ANERA REGARDING THE FEASIBILITY OF AID FUNDING FOR A MAJOR

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PROJECT.

4. ADDITIONAL GESTURES WHICH THE DEPARTMENT MIGHT WHISH TO CONSIDER TO SIGNAL CONCERN AND SUPPORT FOR MODERATE PALESTINIANS INCLUDE:

(A) A HIGHER PROFILE ON ISRAELI HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES INCLUDING RESTRICTIONS ON POLITICAL ACTIVITIES. DEPARTMENT MIGHT STRESS INEVITABLE LIMITATIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS STEMMING FROM OCCUPATION AS WELL AS INEVITABLE HARM TO ISRAELI MORAL FABRIC.

(B) RECEPTION BY SENIOR US OFFICIALS OF DISTINGUISHED (NON-PLO) PALESTINIANS OR PALESTINIAN-AMERICANS AS SUGGESTED REFTEL.

(C) PRESENTATION BY HIGH ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL AT PALESTINIAN CONFERENCE, E.G. ANNUAL MEETING OF RAMALLAH CLUBS.

(D) FACILITATING VISAS FOR PLO MODERATES SUCH AS SABRI JIRYUS OR 'ISSAM SARTAWI. AMONG PALESTINIANS TECHNICAL IMPEDIMENT TO OBTAINING VISAS HAVE BEEN WIDELY INTERPRETED AS A NEGATIVE POLITICAL SIGNAL. AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE, NO DOUBT,

WOULD QUICKLY PROFIT BY IMPROVEMENTS IN JIRYUS' OR SARTAW'S
STATUS AND MIGHT SERVE AS A USEFUL CHANNEL FOR COMMUNICATING
SUCH A DECISION.
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Message Attributes

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